

Appl. No.: 09/775,000
Amdt. Dated: July 22, 2004
Reply to Office Action of: April 22, 2004

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Examiner's objection to the specification, applicants have amended the specification at page 1 to include the serial number of the related application. In response to the Examiner's objection to Figures 2 and 3 (failing to mention reference numerals 36 and 54), applicants have amended the specification at page 14 to mention reference numeral 36 and have amended Figure 3 to remove reference number 54. A clean copy of Figure 3 is attached hereto.

The Examiner rejected priorly presented claims 1-5 as anticipated, 35 USC 102(e), by Raschke at al., patent 6,653,933, November 25, 2003 (hereinafter Raschke). In response thereto, applicants have amended claim 1 to more clearly recite that the "general unique global network address" of the smart appliance is not the actual network address of the smart appliance but maps to this actual address. Applicants have further amended claim 1 to recite that the message routed from the global server to the smart appliance is not only addressed using this general unique global address but are is routed through the communications network based on this address. To expedite the prosecution of this application, applicants have cancelled claims 2-5.

Applicants' invention is directed at communications between a smart appliance/device on a local smart appliance network and a global agent/server external to the local smart appliance network. Typically, for a global server to send an instruction message to a smart appliance, the global server must address the message using the smart appliance's actual address, embedding the address in the message. The message is then routed from the global server to the smart appliance using this actual address. (Specification, page 3, line 17 to page 4, line 6; page 12, lines 13-17). Applicants' invention overcomes the need for a server to use actual addresses and uses a modified version of the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) that allows a server to communicate with a smart appliance using a general unique global network address rather than an actual address.

Specifically, as recited by amended claim 1, applicants' invention is a global appliance network system comprising a global server and a smart appliance on a local network, the smart appliance having an actual network address and a general unique global network address that can map to the actual network address. The global server communicates with the smart appliance using a general addressing scheme. Under this scheme the global server sends an instruction message to the smart appliance by addressing the message with the smart appliance's general unique global network address. The general addressing scheme routes this message from the global server through a communications

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network to the smart appliance based on the general unique global network address. In other words, each hop through the communications network examines the general unique global network address and based on this address, forwards the message towards the smart appliance. (Specification, page 14, line 17 to page 18, line 8; Figure 3).

The Examiner indicates that Raschke teaches in column 4, lines 41-61 a smart appliance with a general unique global network address. Applicants respectfully disagree. In this reference, Raschke teaches that each node (i.e., smart appliance) on a local network is assigned is "Globally Unique Identifier" and possibly a "Domain Unique Alias Identifier"; however, these identifies are not a general unique global network address as amended claim 1 recites but rather, are "absolute" addresses (i.e., actual addresses) each of which "enables a node to directly address other nodes" without "requiring intervention by a ... controller or ... server." More importantly, the Examiner indicates that Raschke teaches in column 4, lines 41-61 and column 5, lines 16-25 a global server that uses a general addressing scheme to communicate a message to a smart appliance by addressing the message with the smart appliance's general unique global network address. Again, applicants respectfully disagree. First, in this reference, Raschke describes local node-to-local node communications, and not global node- to-local node communications. More importantly, the communications here use actual addresses and Raschke fails to teach or suggest that messages are routed using a general unique global network address, as claim 1 now recites.

Note further that in Raschke column 14, lines 47-60, Raschke teaches a remote computer 128 (i.e., a global server) commanding a local node/device. However, these teachings are still divergent from applicants' invention. In particular, Raschke teaches that the remote computer selects an intended node/device and a command for this device and then transmits this information directly to another global server, server 120. Server 120 processes this information, adding the actual address of the intended node/device, and then transmits this new information directly to a gateway 116. Gateway 116 then further processes the information, finally forwarding the original command to the intended node/device using the device's actual address. Significantly, none of the communications from the remote computer 128 to the intended device include a general unique global network address of a local node and more importantly, Raschke fails to teach or suggest that the routing here is based on a general unique global network address. Accordingly, Raschke fails to teach or suggest amended claim 1.

The Examiner rejected priorly presented claim 6 as unpatentable, 35 USC 103(a), over Raschke in view of Orton, patent 6,678,735, January 13, 2004 (hereinafter Orton). In particular, the Examiner indicates that given the teachings of Orton, it is obvious to modify

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Raschke to include the SIP protocol to transport and route messages from a global server to a smart appliance. Applicants respectfully disagree. First, Orton is directed at the original intention of SIP, a "signalling protocol for creating, modifying, and terminating sessions" between a client and server. Sessions are "multimedia conferences, Internet telephone calls, and similar applications". (Orton, column 1, lines 12-22, column 3, lines 31-39). Although Orton teaches a system for simplifying SIP messages between a client and server, Orton continues to only teach the use of SIP to establish sessions. (Orton, column 5, lines 6-54). There is no motivation in either Orton or Raschke for using SIP in a global network appliance system and more specifically, there is no motivation to use the SIP protocol to convey an instruction from a global server to a smart appliance where the instruction is to be performed on the smart appliance, as claims 1 and 6 recite. Again, SIP's purpose at the time of applicants' invention and as taught by Orton was to establish sessions. Note further that in one aspect, applicants' invention incorporates the use of SIP in global appliance networks to achieve a general addressing scheme, thereby overcoming prior scalability problems. (Specification, page 3, lines 17-24; page 8, lines 17-20). Again, neither Raschke nor Orton teaches or suggests a scalability issue and/or a need for general addressing in smart appliance networks as such, both fail to motivate the use of SIP to control smart appliances. Accordingly, Orton, alone or in combination with Raschke, fails to teach or suggest amended claims 1 and 6.

The Examiner rejected priorly presented claim 7 as unpatentable, 35 USC 103(a), over Raschke in view of Orton and in further view of Martin, patent 6,247,017, June 12, 2001 (hereinafter Martin). Martin teaches a directory service system whereby a client can access a directory service for information and the directory service can also push information to the client. The messages that move information between the client and directory service are based on the Lightweight Directory Access Protocol. (Orton, column 4, lines 33-63). As such, Martin's teachings are divergent from applicants' invention. In particular, Martin fails to teach or suggest a smart appliance with a general unique global network address, a global server that uses a general addressing scheme in combination with this general unique global network address to communicate an instruction message to a smart appliance, or the use of SIP to control smart appliances, as claims 1 and 6, from which claim 7 depends, recite. Accordingly, Martin, alone or in combination with Raschke and Orton, fails to teach or suggest amended claims 1 and 6, and as such, claim 7 is novel and non-obvious for the same reasons as set forth above.

The Examiner rejected priorly presented claims 8 and 9 as unpatentable, 35 USC 103(a), over Raschke in view of "Applicants' Admitted Prior Art" (AAPA) (i.e., traversing a

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firewall). In response thereto, applicants have amended claim 8 to recite limitations similar to claim 1 and have cancelled claim 9 to expedite prosecution of this application. Accordingly, amended claim 8 is novel and nonobvious in view of Raschke and the AAPA for the same reasons as set forth above for claim 1.


The Examiner rejected priorly presented claim 10 as unpatentable, 35 USC 103(a), over Raschke in view of AAPA and in further view of Orton. Applicants have amended claim 10 to be similar to claim 6 and accordingly, claim 10 is novel and non-obvious in view of the cited prior art for the same reasons as set forth above for claim 6.

The Examiner rejected priorly presented claim 11 as unpatentable, 35 USC 103(a), over Raschke in view of AAPA and in further view of Orton and in further view of Martin. Claim 11 is similar to claim 7 and is therefore novel and non-obvious in view of the cited prior art for the same reasons as set forth above.

Since Raschke, Orton, Martin, and "Applicants' Admitted Prior Art" do not teach or suggest applicants' novel methods and systems alone or in combination as set forth in amended claims 1, 6-8, and 10-11, applicants submit that these claims are clearly allowable. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of these claims are therefore requested.

Applicants earnestly believe that this application is now in condition to be passed to issue, and such action is also respectfully requested. However, if the Examiner deems it would in any way facilitate the prosecution of this application, she is invited to telephone applicants' agent at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,
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